



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: August 29, 2008

TO: Ray Giometti, Planning Commission Chair
Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Kris Sorensen, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: **CPA# 2008-M-02: Business District Overlays**

DESCRIPTION

Four Business Districts currently exist in the City as created through policies in the Commercial Corridor section of the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Element. These Districts and their unique development standards encourage more urban and vibrant, pedestrian oriented, higher density commercial areas. The City initiated this Comprehensive Plan Amendment to encourage this more urban development pattern in additional Commercial Corridors as well as streamline related development regulations. With the goal of streamlining development standards to make them more user and administration friendly and the goal of allowing more intense development in commercial areas where the City wants to encourage more pedestrian oriented and higher density mixed use development, this proposal provides solutions for both.

The proposal is to eliminate Business Districts altogether and merge unique District standards with the underlying zone regulations. This is a different approach than expanding or creating new Business Districts, but one that continues to implement City objectives and policies. An example of these policies is Objective LU-GGG which reads, *"guide redevelopment of land in the Commercial Corridor designation with Commercial Arterial zoning, from the existing strip commercial forms into more concentrated forms, in which structures and parking evolve from the existing suburban form, to more efficient urban configurations with cohesive site planning."* The Commercial Corridor policies where Business District policies have been located can be found in Attachment D.

Both the Comprehensive Plan and the Renton Municipal Code Development Regulations would be amended under this proposal where policies and maps would be changed or eliminated and regulations consolidated. Also, as part of this process, there is a review of stand alone residential and small vehicle sales uses as they relate to the underlying Commercial Arterial zone. Furthermore, there is a discussion of whether a change in land use designation for Commercial Arterial zoned parcels near Rainier Avenue.

ISSUES SUMMARY

1. How can the city effectively streamline Business District development standards and what changes should be included?
2. Should stand alone residential uses be allowed in the Commercial Arterial zone?

3. Where in the Commercial Arterial zone should small vehicle sales uses be encouraged?
4. What updates to the Zoning Use Table should be made?
5. Should CA zoned parcels near Rainier Avenue be re-designated to Commercial Corridor from Employment Area Valley?
6. What changes should be made to the Comprehensive Plan?

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

1. Business District Overlay development standards should be merged into the Commercial Arterial zone standards and the District 'D' Urban Design Regulations should be applied to new development to encourage the development and re-development of Commercial Arterial zoned properties. Additional development standards to change should be:
 - Minimum lot size;
 - Maximum height and procedure for additional height requests;
 - Site-to-site vehicular access; and
 - Minimum parking stall requirement for residential uses.
2. Stand alone residential uses should be eliminated in the Commercial Arterial zone. Any residential component should be part of a mixed use (commercial / residential) building.
3. New small vehicle sales uses (i.e. car lots) in Commercial Arterial zoned areas should be encouraged to locate to the Renton Automall and Employment Area Valley.
4. References to Business Districts in city code should be changed to reflect their deletion.
5. Commercial Arterial zoned properties near the Rainier Avenue Commercial Corridor (between SW Grady Way to the south, the BNSF railroad right-of-way to the north, Rainier Avenue to the east, and Lind Avenue SW) should be re-designated to a Commercial Corridor land use designation rather than the current Employment Area Valley designation.
6. Related objectives, policies, and maps for Business Districts in the Comprehensive Plan should be deleted and some new policies should be created in the Commercial Corridor land use section that support development standards unique to the Rainier, NE 4th, NE Sunset, and Puget areas.

1) HOW CAN THE CITY EFFECTIVELY STREAMLINE BUSINESS DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS?

There are multiple layers of city code that apply to projects in Business Districts. Staff proposes that these layers be consolidated as part of eliminating Business Districts where the purpose for Business Districts is still implemented. Currently, a property located in a District must meet the underlying Commercial Arterial zone development regulations as well as District Overlay standards. If a residential use is part of a project in a Business District, there are additional code sections that apply including design standards and criteria on whether stand alone residential (i.e. townhouse) should be permitted. These Renton Municipal Code (RMC) sections are:

- **RMC 4-2-120A Commercial Arterial Zone Development Standards:** This section provides the basic standards, i.e. lot dimension, lot coverage, density, setbacks, landscaping, height, parking, etc.
- **RMC 4-3-040 Business District Overlay:** This section provides additional standards for all development within Districts for setbacks and District geographic boundaries.
- **RMC 4-3-100 Urban Design Regulations District 'B':** This section provides design regulations for projects in Business Districts with residential uses, i.e. site design and building location, parking and vehicular access, pedestrian environment, landscaping and common open spaces, building architectural design, etc.
- **RMC 4-9-030K Conditional Use Permit for Stand Alone Residential Uses:** This section provides decision criteria for stand alone residential structures as they are not allowed in the majority of CA zoning districts.

These multiple layers of regulations are difficult for property owners, developers, and community members to understand and are also difficult to explain and administer. The option of merging the Business District Overlay standards into the underlying CA zone standards and applying design standards from the Urban Design Regulations section would simplify these multiple layers. This simplification would still implement and encourage the City's Vision and policies for commercial districts where Business Districts currently exist.

What should be included from the overlay?

Attachment A is a list of the current development standards of the CA zone and the Business District Overlay. In merging Overlay standards with the underlying CA zone, some development standards from the Business District Overlay will become standards including:

- *Minimum and Maximum Net Residential Density:* For buildings with a residential use, the minimum would be 10 dwelling units per net acre (du/na) and a maximum of 60 du/na.
- *Maximum front yard setback:* The Overlay standard of fifteen feet (15') would be applied rather than the CA zone standard of no maximum as this provides for a more urban development pattern versus the current suburban development pattern.
- *Public Plazas:* Public plazas as the Overlay has defined them are 1,200 square foot spaces with landscaping and seating areas at intersections. They both create visual interest for commercial districts and areas for customers and pedestrians to frequent. The list of intersections will be placed in the applicable design standards and Attachment B is a list of plaza locations.
- *Parking elements:* These Overlay standards will be added to the underlying zone:
 - No more than six stalls may be consecutively clustered without an intervening landscaped area. This breaking up of parking stalls is

supported by Comprehensive Plan policy and more prescriptively defines where on-site landscaping is to occur.

- Residential unit parking is to be enclosed within the building.
- *Pedestrian connections to building entries and next door commercial and residential properties:* The underlying zone standard of creating connections between the street and public entries and the Overlay standard of establishing connections to adjacent commercial and residential uses will both be part of the updated CA zone regulations.
- *Rainier area specific sign regulations:* Current Rainier Overlay standards that restrict freestanding signs to monument signs should be kept and the prohibition of billboard signs should be deleted as billboards are not allowed city wide.
- *Commercial space reservation:* “Commercial space must be reserved on the ground floor of all mixed use buildings, at a minimum depth of thirty feet (30’) along the street frontage on the ground floor” should be included in the merger so that a minimum amount of space is provided in each project.
- *Location of residential uses:* “Residential uses shall not be located in the ground floor commercial space, except for a residential entry feature linking the residential portion of the development to the street” will be included in the merger with the section above on reserving commercial space on the ground floor.

Which Design District should be applied?

There are five design districts found in the Urban Design Regulations section of the code (RMC 4-3-100). Currently, residential uses within a Business District must adhere to Design District ‘B’ standards. District ‘B’ was created for the primarily residential South Renton area and its anticipated housing growth. As discussed in previous Planning Commission meetings on this topic, instead of applying District ‘B’ standards, it would be more effective to use an alternative Design District created specifically for higher density commercial areas.

Below is the list and brief description of design districts around the city:

- *District ‘A’:* Implements the Vision for portions of the Urban Center – Downtown area for mainly the Commercial Downtown zoned area.
- *District ‘B’:* Implements design standards for the South Renton Neighborhood area which is a residential area with capacity for higher residential density.
- *District ‘C’:* Implements the Vision for the Urban Center – North area where the Landing and Boeing are located.
- *District ‘D’:* Implements the Vision for the Center Village designation in the Highlands specific to the Center Village commercial core.
- *District ‘E’:* Implements the Vision for the residential portion of the Center Village designation in the Highlands.

There was consideration of creating a new design district unique to the Commercial Arterial zone but there is already a design district that reflects the type of development

encouraged and envisioned for these commercial districts. The district that best reflects the type of commercial and mixed use development expected in CA zoned areas is District 'D.' This district was created for the mixed use commercial core area of the Highlands Center Village designation along Northeast Sunset Boulevard between Edmonds and Monroe Avenues. It is the most similar in comparison with the CA zoning districts in regards to the anticipated development pattern and pedestrian oriented commercial cores that support surrounding neighborhoods versus the larger lot big box, downtown, and residential areas encouraged in other design districts.

Policy that supports design standards are found in the Comprehensive Plan's Community Design Element with a specific section on commercial development. These policies are provided in Attachment C. For each Design Districts there are seven categories:

- Site design and building location;
- Parking and Vehicular Access;
- Pedestrian Environment;
- Landscaping/Recreation Areas/Common Open Space;
- Building Architectural Design;
- Signage; and
- Lighting.

Each category is divided into two sections, a set of minimum standards which must be met and guidelines which are provided to further the intent of each standard but are not requirements.

Minimum lot size

Previous to the allowance of townhomes in some of the Commercial Arterial Business Districts there was a difference in standards. The previous standard of five thousand square feet (5,000 s.f.) was amended to twelve thousand square feet (12,000 s.f.) to allow smaller townhomes lots in three Business Districts. Since it is proposed that such attached dwelling uses no longer be permitted, the 12,000 s.f. standard is no longer necessary. But there should be a minimum as no minimum allows for the subdivision of properties into small parcels. Small parcels conflicts with encouraging re-development, where Comprehensive Plan policies support the consolidation of properties to make redevelopment more feasible in CA districts.

Change in allowed building height

It is proposed that mixed use (commercial and residential uses in the same building) projects be allowed additional height above the current limit and that the process for requesting additional height be amended. The maximum height will be kept at fifty feet (50') for commercial only buildings. Up to sixty feet (60') for mixed use buildings would allow flexibility in project design. Where residential parking is required to be enclosed in the building and residential units are not allowed on the first floor to provide space for commercial uses and parking, the additional height allows projects to still create livable spaces rather than try to force lower ceilings and smaller living units into a 50' limit. This increase would also allow flexibility for commercial space ceiling heights. As a project could be considered mixed use if there is just one dwelling unit, there should be a

condition that a certain amount of residential space be required in a project to receive the 60' height.

Currently, there is not a consistent process for additional height requests where either the Hearing Examiner or the Administrator (i.e. Planning Director) makes the decision. Where the Examiner may make a decision for one Commercial Arterial zoned area, the Administrator may make a decision on additional heights in another CA zoned area. To create a more consistent process, all additional height requests should go through an Administrative Conditional Use Permit process. Requests must meet the Conditional Use criteria as outlined in RMC 4-9-030 including elements like complying with the Comprehensive Plan, the effect on adjacent properties, compatibility with neighborhood character, parking, traffic, noise, landscaping, etc.

Site-to-site Vehicular Access

Commercial Corridor policies (that have been in place for Business Districts) focus on supporting development plans with shared access points, fewer curb cuts, shared parking facilities and internal circulation among adjacent parcels. There is little in the way of development standards that try and create greater circulation and movement among commercial parcels. There are standards for pedestrian connections to and from abutting properties but no vehicular connection standards. Reasons to encourage joint and cross access amongst abutting commercial properties in the CA zone include:

- The reduction of left hand turn lanes from main arterials through road improvements and medians which will create less direct vehicle connectivity to businesses;
- Fences, walls, and internal landscaping have historically divided properties;
- Parking areas will be towards the back of lots due to maximum setback requirements for buildings so there will be a more consistent area where parking areas and aisles can connect for cross access;
- Creation of more unified commercial areas that share internal circulation and are easier to reach without re-entering main roadways with high traffic volumes.

This proposal for site-to-site access is further supported by Policy T-16 of the Transportation Element in the Comprehensive Plan. The policy reads “access management, such as restricting left turns and excessive use of driveways, should be coordinated with design standards and land use in order to enhance public safety and preserve traffic carrying capacity.” Left turn lanes will be reduced as part of road improvements in the Benson area on 108th Avenue, on Rainier Avenue, and NE Fourth Street. It is important that additional connectivity be provided between commercial activities and businesses as connections from main arterials decrease.

Required Residential Parking

Parking standards for the CA zone currently require that for each residential unit 1.75 parking spaces be provided to support the residential use. This is both a maximum and minimum requirement. With the idea of encouraging more density in the CA zone where there is greater access to transit and closer proximity of shopping and daily services as compared to other areas in the city, it is important that the city code reflect this lesser reliance on vehicles. It is proposed that the required 1.75 parking spaces still be allowed,

but that a lower minimum be established so flexibility is allowed for a project. A minimum requirement of one parking space and maximum of 1.75 spaces for residential uses similar to the Center Village standard is recommended.

2) SHOULD STAND ALONE RESIDENTIAL USES BE ALLOWED IN THE CA ZONE?

Of all Commercial Arterial (CA) zoned areas in the city, stand alone residential projects like townhouses have only been allowed in three Business Districts. The rest of the CA zoned parcels outside of these Business Districts only allow residential uses in mixed use structures. It is proposed that for these three districts, stand alone residential should not continue to be permitted. Stand alone projects do not implement the goals and policies for Commercial Corridor areas. Policies related to residential uses in these areas include policy for mixed use development but there are no specific policies supporting residential only.

In Business Districts where stand alone residential has been allowed, recent project examples have not contributed to increasing community access to and from commercial districts as envisioned in Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies. These recent townhouse style projects have relied on internal circulation with no vehicular connection and little pedestrian connections to and from retail and other commercial services. Commercial Corridor areas, although made up of different properties and ownerships, are envisioned to function as cohesive mixed use areas with strengthened site-to-site connections.

Commercial Arterial zoned properties in Commercial Corridors are encouraged to create a more cohesive, connected, less strip commercial type area and the allowance of stand alone residential would continue creating fewer physical community connections and continue perpetuating a strip commercial development pattern.

3) SHOULD SMALL VEHICLE SALES USES BE PERMITTED IN THE CA ZONE?

Commercial Arterial zoned properties are located throughout the city and found in Commercial Corridor and Employment Area Valley designations. Considering the Comprehensive Plan's vision for the Automall and EAV, and the Vision for more urban, pedestrian oriented, denser commercial areas in Commercial Corridor designations, small vehicle sales uses should be encouraged to locate to the Automall and EAV.

With the exception of the NE 4th, NE Sunset Boulevard, and Puget Drive commercial districts, small vehicle sales have been permitted on Commercial Arterial zoned properties. Small vehicle sales are defined in as the sale of "motor vehicles, motorcycles, passenger cars, light trucks, vans, and similar size vehicles which have gross vehicle weights less than ten thousand (10,000) pounds." The use is also allowed in the three industrial zones (Light, Medium, and Heavy Industrial).

To continue supporting the auto and vehicle sales industry while at the same time encouraging the redevelopment of Commercial Corridors, the City created the Renton Automall. Objective LU-KKK of the Comprehensive Plan reads, "Provide support for a cohesive Commercial Corridor District specifically for the concentration of auto- and vehicular-related businesses in order to increase their revenue and the sales tax base of the City" which allowed the creation of the Automall. The creation of the Automall has encouraged vehicle sales businesses to

concentrate close to major arterials and traffic volumes where potential customers can comparison shop.

The Employment Area Valley (EAV) is another area in the city where small vehicle sales should be encouraged to locate. The purpose of the EAV “is to allow the gradual transition of the Valley from traditional industrial and warehousing uses to more intensive retail service and office activities” (page IX-79). There are already a number of vehicle sales businesses that have located along the East Valley Road as this area transitions that add to the mix of employment opportunities. Where Commercial Corridors are focused towards a more efficient use of land with a 60 du/na incentive for new development, residential is not permitted in the EAV to provide property specifically for employment uses.

4) WHAT UPDATES TO THE ZONING USE TABLE SHOULD BE MADE?

There are multiple changes to the Zoning Use Table in RMC 4-2-060 for the Commercial Arterial zone needed to reflect changes described throughout this paper. It is also proposed that maximum gross floor area restrictions for commercial and office uses in the Sunset, NE 4th, and Puget Business Districts be eliminated as part of the streamlining effort as big box commercial uses (defined as “no less than 75,000 square feet”) are already restricted in these three areas and would continue to be restricted. Other proposed changes and explanations for Notes 18, 20, 68, and 69 are as follow (these notes are specific to the CA zone classification):

Note 18 – Restrictions on allowed Residential Use

This condition has two elements. It does not allow residential uses in the Employment Area Valley and it establishes where stand alone dwellings (i.e. non-mixed use commercial and residential buildings like townhomes) can be located. With the proposed elimination of stand alone residential, any changes would mainly focus on the restriction of residential in the EAV and Business District Overlay standards that relate to residential uses. Overlay standards that should be added to this note:

- Commercial space must be reserved on the ground floor at a minimum of thirty feet (30’) along the street frontage in mixed use structures, and
- Residential uses shall not be located in the ground floor commercial space, except for a residential entry feature linking the residential portion of the development to the street.

Note 20 – Restricting uses in certain Commercial Corridors

Business District boundaries have been used to restrict certain uses and with the proposed elimination of these districts and their boundaries a change that reflects these restrictions is necessary. Uses that have been restricted from the Sunset, NE 4th, and Puget districts include taverns, dance clubs and halls, sports arenas, outdoor recreational facilities like private tennis courts or miniature golf, hotels, motels, vehicle rental services, structured parking, transit centers, and research and light manufacturing laboratories. Text referring to “Business Districts” will be changed to “Commercial Corridors” to continue this limitation.

Note 68 – Department Stores

Department stores are not permitted in the Puget and Sunset Business Districts. This note is proposed to be deleted. City code does not define the use and there are restrictions on where big box retail can be located. Department stores generally locate in regional shopping areas like the Landing or in a mall versus smaller neighborhood market areas like Puget and Sunset.

Note 69 – Limitation of On-site Services

This note states that “within the Sunset and Puget [Business Districts] only the following on-site services are permitted: entertainment media rental, financial and real estate services, and repair services (excluding auto repair). Rental services require an administrative conditional use permit.” This should be deleted as these commercial areas should allow the same on-site services as allowed in other CA zoned districts as these services would help fulfill the market needs of surrounding neighborhoods and customers. In the municipal code, “on-site services” are defined as:

Establishments primarily engaged in providing individual or professional services within the place of business, such as beauty and barber shops, retail laundry and dry-cleaning including coin-operated, garment alterations and repair, photo studios, shoe repair, pet grooming, photography and photo reproduction, real estate offices, personal accountants, entertainment media rental or other indoor rental services, and repair of personal or household items, except for vehicle repair. This definition excludes adult retail uses, service and social organizations, and off-site services.

5) SHOULD COMMERCIAL ARTERIAL ZONED PARCELS NEAR RAINIER RECEIVE A COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR LAND USE DESIGNATION?

Properties near the Rainier Commercial Corridor area should be considered for the Commercial Corridor land use designation. These properties are similar to properties throughout the Rainier Commercial Corridor in regards to location to principal roadways, types of commercial uses, and strip commercial development style. Currently, these CA zoned properties are in the Employment Area Valley (EAV) designation and are not allowed to redevelop with residential uses. The EAV is an area generally west of Rainier Avenue and State Route 167 to the city boundary with Tukwila, south to the Kent boundary, with a northern boundary just north of SW 7th Street and Monster Road SW. Multiple zones implement the EAV land use designation including Commercial Arterial. Employment Area Valley policies focus on employment uses versus the Commercial Corridor designation which, as described throughout, is to be a more urban, pedestrian oriented, higher density area that provides daily services.

Properties being considered are the Commercial Arterial zoned parcels bounded by the Burlington Northern railroad right of way to the north, Rainier Avenue to the east, SW Grady to the south, and Lind Avenue SW to the west. Businesses in this area include:

- Walmart and the smaller business part of this shopping center,
- Billy McHales,
- Jimmy Macs Roadhouse,
- Popeyes,
- Super Supplements,

- Pho Thai Restaurant,
- the Renton School District Knowles Education Center,
- Bob Bridge Toyota Scion,
- Lithia vehicle dealership,
- Curran Plaza businesses,
- Arbys,
- Brown Bear Car Wash, and
- the Honda dealership.

The EAV designation does not allow residential uses, meaning the CA parcels within the EAV cannot redevelop with the 60 du/na option. The allowance of 60 du/na is to encourage the redevelopment of commercial areas like other CA zoned parcels along Rainier Avenue and SW Grady Way. These properties meet criteria for the Commercial Corridor designation. Objective LU-DDD states that properties in the Commercial Corridor land use designation should include:

- Established commercial and office areas;
- Developments located on large parcels of land;
- Projects that may be highly visible from principal arterials;
- Uses dependent upon or benefiting from high-volume traffic;
- Uses that provide significant employment; and
- Businesses that provide necessary or desirable goods and services to the larger community.

This land use designation change would not impact allowed uses as it is not a rezone. The only use that would be impacted would be the small vehicle sales uses. As a previous section describes, small vehicle sales should be encouraged to locate to the Automall and EAV areas. The three vehicle sales businesses on these CA properties, (Bob Bridge and Lithia along Hardie Avenue SW and Bob Lamphere Kia along Lind Avenue SW), would not be impacted through the proposed designation change as they are already part of the Automall.

WHAT CHANGES SHOULD BE MADE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Multiple Comprehensive Plan amendments should be made to support changes described in the sections above. Although necessary to preserve a few policies related to certain Business Districts, the largest amendment should be the elimination of the Business District related sections in the Commercial section of the Land Use element as shown in Attachment D. Other changes relate to sections discussed above, both in relation to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use map and text, are as follows:

Proposed map amendments are:

- Change in land use designation for Residential Multi Family (RMF) zoned parcels currently part of the Commercial Corridor land use designation near NE Sunset Boulevard. The Commercial Corridor designation is not implemented with the RMF zone. The designation for these properties should change to the Residential Multi Family land use designation.

- Commercial Arterial properties currently within the Employment Area Valley designation west of Rainier Avenue South should be changed to the Commercial Corridor designation.
- Maps for Business Districts in the Commercial Corridor section should be deleted as part of this proposal.

Proposed text amendments are:

Sunset, NE 4th, and Puget Corridors

The Sunset, NE 4th, and Puget CA zoned parcels in Business Districts have had restrictions on certain uses and there needs to an accompanying objective and policy referencing Commercial Corridors. The change supports the Note 20 change for the zoning use table.

Objective: The NE Sunset Boulevard, Northeast Fourth, and Puget Corridors are unique in the City due to the highly eclectic mix of commercial and residential uses. These areas are gateways to and from the urban center.

Policy: Similar uses to those found in the NE Sunset Boulevard Corridor, NE 4th Corridor, and Puget Drive Corridor should be fostered as development and re-development of properties in these areas occurs over time.

Small Vehicle Sales

To encourage new vehicle sales in the CA zone to locate in the Automall area and the Employment Area Valley, a policy should be created under Objective LU-EEE. This policy would be similar to policies used in certain Business Districts, like current policy LU-386... “vehicle sales businesses existing in the NE Sunset Boulevard Business Corridor should be encouraged to relocate to the Renton Automall District.” The suggested policy would read:

Vehicle sales businesses existing in the Commercial Arterial zoning designation should be encouraged to locate to the Renton Automall District and Employment Area Valley.

Rainier Corridor and Signs

To support development regulations in the city code regarding the type of signage that should be created for commercial uses along the Rainier Corridor, the following objective and policy from the Rainier Business District should be placed into the Commercial Corridor designation section. The District Overlay code has specific policy prohibiting billboards and as this is already a standard city wide, a supporting policy is unnecessary.

Objective: The Rainier Avenue Corridor is one of the busiest arterials in the City and is located as a gateway to the City from both the south and north. The design, function, and configuration of development and re-development should reflect its status as a key gateway.

Policy: Business signs in the Rainier Avenue Corridor should be uniform in size, content, and location to reduce visual clutter. Monument signs are the preferred type.

Boulevard Improvement

Commercial Corridor areas are served by main traffic through-ways into and out of the city. As with efforts specific to the NE 4th Boulevard Improvement Plan and Rainier Avenue Improvement Plan, there should be policy that supports the enhancement of these key arterials. This policy would reflect the current policy LU-390 for the NE 4th commercial area where the main arterial “should be enhanced with boulevard design features... for the purpose of improving safety through traffic control and slowing traffic for pedestrian safety and improved conditions for vehicles leaving and entering the principal arterial.” Suggested policy would be located under Objective LU-GGG of the Commercial Corridor land use designation section and read:

Key arterials should be enhanced with boulevard design features such as landscaped center-of-road medians for the purpose of improving safety through traffic control and slowing traffic for pedestrian safety and improved conditions for vehicles leaving and entering the principal arterial.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment must meet at least one of the criteria in RMC 4-9-020G. This requires that it be found that:

- 1) The request supports the vision embodied in the Comprehensive Plan, or
- 2) The request supports the adopted business plan goals established by the City Council, or
- 3) The request eliminates conflicts with existing elements or policies, or
- 4) The request amends the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate new policy directives of the City Council.

This Comprehensive Plan Amendment is City initiated. Changes to the Comprehensive Plan are to reflect elements discussed in this proposal, the most significant change being the deletion of sections on Business Districts in the Commercial Corridor designation section of the Land Use Element. It is also important that other proposed changes to both the development standards and allowed uses be supported by Plan policies in the Commercial Corridor land use designation.

- The merged development standards for the CA zone and application of design standards are supported by policies in the Commercial Corridor land use section in chapter ten of the Land Use Element and chapter five of the Community Design Element.
- Restricting residential uses to mixed use buildings in the CA zone is supported by the policies in the Commercial Corridor land use section as there are policies that support mixed use development and no policies supporting stand alone residential uses.

- Encouraging small vehicle sales in CA zoning districts to the Automall and Employment Area Valley areas complies with both the current policy of concentrating such uses in the Automall and new policy created as part of this amendment process.
- The suggested change in land use designation for CA zoned properties near Rainier and Grady from an Employment Area Valley designation to a Commercial Corridor designation complies with Plan policies.
- The changing of land use designations from Commercial Corridor to Residential Multi Family for Residential Multi Family zoned properties near NE Sunset Boulevard are supported by policies that prescribe which zoning districts implement the different land use designations.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends that all changes described above should be part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposal. Staff also recommends the Planning Commission take action to forward this proposal to the Public Hearing for all 2008 amendments. Property owners impacted by the proposal as well as property owners within three hundred feet of these properties will be contacted prior to the Public Hearing to allow interested parties the chance to take part in the process and provide input.

ATTACHMENTS

- A: Current Commercial Arterial and Business District Overlay Development Standards
- B: List of intersections for locations of public plazas
- C: Community Design Element Policies related to development in Commercial Districts
- D: Commercial Corridor designation with proposed deletion of Business District policies